

Professional Preparation in Sport Management: An Empirical Study

Craig M. Ross
Indiana University

Lynn M. Jamieson
Indiana University

Sarah J. Young
University of Nevada-Las Vegas

Abstract

The current status of professional preparation programs in sport management was examined at 147 institutions. Specific courses, options, concentrations, and degree programs were reviewed at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. Additional aspects which were identified were the administrative structure housing the sport management program, the philosophical emphasis of the program, and the employment and placement trends of sport management graduates. The findings of the study indicated that the sport management curricula varied widely from one institution to another. Implications of the results are discussed along with recommendations for future study and the promotion of sport management professional preparation programs.

Keywords: professional preparation, sport management, curriculum, recreational sports

Biographical Information

Craig Ross and Lynn Jamieson are Associate Professors in the Department of Recreation and Park Administration, HPER 133, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405. Sarah young is an Assistant Professor in the Leisure Studies Program, Department of tourism and Convention Administration, 4505 Maryland Parkway, Box 453035, University of Nevada-Las Vegas, Las Vegas, NV 89143-3035

Introduction

The impact of sport upon today's society has far surpassed the expectations, and perhaps even the wildest dreams of the sport field's founders. Sport has evolved from a diversion to work and a tool of development, to a multi-billion dollar industry. Parkhouse (1996) describes this evolution of sport as "a dominant influence in American society," and further states that "the growth of the sport industry in the last half-century has been phenomenal" (p.3). In light of the dramatic changes already witnessed, the evidence is

overwhelming that large scale changes are still taking place in society that will impact the way sport and leisure services will be delivered in the future. Kelly (1996) underscores the impact of sport by stating "sport has a major place in modern society as an element of the economy, a spectacle with symbolic meanings, an arena of development for the young, and in the leisure lives of many individuals" (p. 226).

Leisure services, with the tremendous growth of sport participation as a major component, have come to play an integral role in American life. In fact, sport participation far surpasses all other types of recreational activities (Shivers & de Lisle, 1997; Edginton, Jordan, DeGraaf, & Edginton, 1998). Sports and exercise activities have become "mainstays in the lifestyles of large numbers of Americans" (Robinson & Godbey, 1997, p. 186). In suggesting that recreational sport is a "major component of an individual's lifestyle, through either participation in or spectation of sports during leisure," Mull, Bayless, Ross, and Jamieson (1997, p. 14) provide a leisure sport management model (see Figure 1) that embraces the concepts of participation and spectation in sports programming, ranging from educational sport to professional sport.

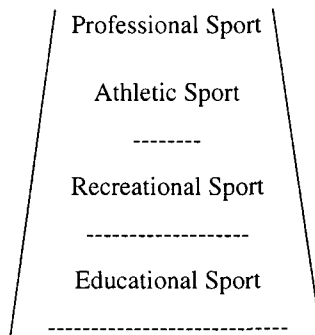


Figure 1. Leisure sport management model.

Note. From *Recreational Sport Management* (p. 15), by R. F. Mull, K. G. Bayless, C. M. Ross and L. M. Jamieson, 1997, Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics Publishers.

This model, while not tested, illustrates the leisure experience of the participant as being more active at the educational and recreational levels. In other words, large numbers of people ranging in age from youth to seniors are actively involved in sport at the instructional and recreational levels. This point is illustrated by the overwhelming response that municipal, commercial, private, corporate and educational settings have experienced in terms of participation rates for instructional and recreational sports programs. However, as one moves up the model towards the apex, participation in the leisure experience shifts from active participation to passive participation. This concept is clearly illustrated at the professional level of sport where the leisure experience of most participants consists of spectating rather than active involvement in the sport. The recreative aspect of sport in American culture today is a well-established, and a well-recognized contributor to

human enjoyment and vitality. Changing times, continual awareness, and the increasing interest in sport participation and fitness by all age groups have spurred the growth of diverse professional preparation programs in sport management.

The growth of sport in our society has directly impacted the profession of sport management and, consequently, its growth and changes in recent years. The NASPE-NAASM Joint Task Force (1993) noted in their report on the development of standards for sport management curricula that “during the past 25 years, the number of 4-year colleges that offer course work experiences in sport management has increased from 1 to approximately 120” (p. 159). With this expansion, the academic departments of Kinesiology/Physical Education and Leisure Studies/Recreation have attempted to meet the needs and demands of both students and practitioners by offering various sport management curriculums. While academic sport management programs have experienced substantial growth and increasing acceptance within the past several years, actual sport management curricula across the country continue to be quite diverse. Part of this diversity may stem from where programs are administratively housed. Traditionally, sport management programs originated in Kinesiology/Physical Education departments and have focused primarily on the “business” side of sports — specifically sports marketing, public relations, and fund raising (Skipper, 1987). Recently, sport management programs have emerged from Leisure Studies/Recreation departments which place an emphasis on the leadership and management of participatory sport experiences including focusing on the recreational sports participant and the leisure sport spectator. Additionally, sport management oriented programs are now appearing as part of business and education curriculums. This trend, and apparent variability of existing programs, has generated curricular issues and concerns in sport management that require further study (Parkhouse, 1987; DeSensi, Kelley, Beitel & Blanton, 1990). Specific curricular issues revolve around the purpose that sport management programs should fulfill, the theoretical foundation on which sport management curriculum should be based, and the standardization of curricula among different institutions. Parks and Quain (1986) reiterate this by indicating that sport management programs have been developed with little empirical evidence regarding the appropriateness of the programs. Subsequently, research efforts have centered around the identification of what has been done since 1986 to bring us to the present. As a result, additional research is needed to explore the possibility of standardization, or coordination of curricula among institutions offering degree programs and courses in sport management.

A review of the literature indicates a lack of current empirical research in both the theoretical and conceptual foundations, as well as content of professional preparation programs. This lack of research translates directly into a need for more research focused upon theory-building and conceptual-strengthening in sport management. Research of this nature will allow academicians to more clearly define and characterize curricula in sport management and to become more accountable for the variety of courses that are taught. Results from this research can assess the current status and diversity of undergraduate and graduate sport management professional preparation programs in the United

States. These results can also be used for planning curricula models and instructional strategies in addition to the development of curriculum resources.

Currently, curricular standards in sport management are generally supported by the National Recreation and Park Association/American Association of Leisure and Recreation Council on Accreditation (NRPA/AALR) within the Leisure Service Management option, and specific guidelines come from the North American Society for Sport Management/National Association of Sport and Physical Education (NASSM/NASPE). There is currently no association between these two standard-producing bodies. The strength of NRPA/AALR accreditation is the acceptance of these standards by the major accrediting body that accredits all curricula; however, a weakness lies in the general nature of the accreditation standards presented in the leisure service management area in that the standards include, but do not specify, sports management. NASSM/NASPE has more specific sport management standards, but does not have the national accrediting body recognition of the Council for Higher Education Accreditation.

It is imperative that colleges and universities provide appropriate and flexible sport management curriculums that reflect the broad spectrum of sport opportunities, ie. recreational and professional, in order for sport management programs to meet the needs of their graduates and for students to become the best qualified and most highly trained professionals possible in the sport setting of their choice. In addition, there is a need to examine current curricular offerings/recommendations to better reflect the needs of the student and the needs of the practitioner. Tangible support for professional preparation in sport management is needed to assist in developing resource material, teaching facilities, better qualified faculty and ultimately, a more marketable student.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the current status of professional preparation programs in sport management at selected academic institutions in the United States offering programs housed in Kinesiology/Physical Education, Leisure Studies/Recreation or other related administrative locations. The study identified:

1. Undergraduate and graduate courses, options, concentrations or degree programs in sport management.
2. The administrative structure housing the academic programs.
3. The primary mission of the program.
4. Employment/placement trends of sport management graduates.

Methodology

While there are several directories listing undergraduate and graduate sport management programs (NASSM and SPRE), there is no one, all-inclusive listing. Because

of this, several data gathering procedures were used. First, due to the fact that the majority of universities have a campus recreational sport program, a preliminary survey questionnaire and business-reply return envelope were sent to all collegiate recreational sports directors whose university is a member of the National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association ($n = 1,323$). Because these individuals are most familiar with sport management programs on their campuses, they were asked to identify the department(s) and contact person(s) that specifically offer sport management programs or courses on their campus. This list was then compared to all academic institutions who are members of the National Recreation and Park Association — Society of Park and Recreation Educators (SPRE) as well as members of the North American Society for Sport Management (NASSM) to be certain that all known academic sport management programs were represented. This process yielded a total of 242 institutions.

Once institutions were identified, a pilot study was conducted to test the survey instrument for validity and reliability. After making necessary modifications to the survey instrument, the Salant and Dillman (1994) survey method was utilized in implementing the survey. In this method, based on a social exchange theory of why people choose to respond to surveys, attention is given to every administrative detail that may affect an individual's response. To achieve high rates of return, the Salant and Dillman method requires that key elements be followed. This includes cover letters signed with "pressed blue ink" original signatures, the length and look of the questionnaire, including a business-reply envelope, as well as the sequence and timing of all first class postage mailings. Contact persons from each identified sport management program ($N = 242$) were mailed a letter of explanation, a four page-14 question survey instrument and business-reply return envelope during the Spring of 1997. A follow-up postcard was mailed to the entire sample after ten days. A second cover letter, survey instrument and business-reply return envelope was mailed to all non-respondents after three weeks. Of the 242 institutions receiving the survey instrument, 147 institutions (60.7%) responded.

Results

Courses and/or Degree Programs in Sport Management

Of the institutions responding, 78 (59.1%) indicated that they have an undergraduate degree program in sport management while 65 (49.6%) have a specific graduate sport management degree (See Table 1.). In addition, 80 (60.1%) institutions offer undergraduate sport management course(s) compared to 69 (53.1%) at the graduate level. Of the 21 institutions who reported having no degree or course offerings in sport management, only 4 (19%) indicated that they are considering a program in the future. The average number of years the academic sport management program has been in existence were 11.5 years for graduate programs and 9.8 years for undergraduate programs.

Administrative Structure of the Academic Program

Sport management programs are structured in a variety of administrative departments. The administrative structure most commonly found was Kinesiology/Physical

Education departments (54/48.2%) followed by Leisure Studies/Recreation (9/8.0%) and Sport Studies, Sport Management or Sport Administration departments (8/7.1%). Eight programs (7.1%) were administered through a Business department.

TABLE 1
Specific Degree and Course Offerings in Sports Management

Degree Program	Yes		No	
	n	Percent	n	Percent
Undergraduate degree program in Sport Management (n = 132)	78	59.1	54	40.9
Graduate degree program in Sport Management (n = 131)	65	49.6	66	50.4
Undergraduate course(s) in Sport Management (n = 131)	80	60.1	51	38.9
Graduate course(s) in Sport Management (n = 130)	69	53.1	61	46.9
Plan to offer a Sport Management program in the future (n = 21)	4	19.0	17	81.0

Philosophy and Primary Emphasis of the Program

The majority of the respondents, 50 (45.4%) indicated that the major philosophical orientation to the curriculum was in the area of recreational sports and professional sports, while 40 (36.4) indicated a key role with professional sports only and 11 (10.0%) recreational sports only. Nine (8.2%) indicated no particular philosophy or mission toward their curriculum in sport management has been established. Table 2 illustrates the frequency and percentage of responses to the philosophical orientation of sport management curricula. While the emphasis upon both recreational and professional sports has been advocated by NASSM and the NASSM/NASPE guidelines (Sport Management Program Standards and Review Protocol, 1993) for quite some time, the data suggests a large number of institutions place an emphasis on only professional sports management.

Accreditation

The majority of the sport management programs are not currently accredited by any accrediting body. Eighty-seven respondents (74.4%) indicated that their program was not accredited, while 30 (25.6%) indicated some type of accreditation. The most frequent accrediting agency for sport management programs was NASSM/NASPE (11/40.7%) followed by NCATE (6/22.3%). Table 3 indicates the extent of accreditation in

the sport management programs. While there is some connection with NASSM/NASPE and NCATE, the separate listing of NCATE by respondents could refer to specific teacher education accreditation as opposed to specific sport management accreditation.

TABLE 2
Philosophy and Primary Emphasis of Sports Management

Philosophy and Primary Emphasis	n	Percent
Emphasis is divided between sport programming in recreational settings and professional sports marketing and services.	50	45.4
Emphasis is placed on teaching the student to provide management and marketing services for professional and varsity athletic agencies.	40	36.4
Emphasis is placed on teaching the student to plan, organize and otherwise coordinate recreational sports programming and related activities for the masses in a recreational setting.	11	10.0
Our philosophy and primary emphasis have not been fully determined at this time.	9	8.20
(n = 110)		

TABLE 3
Programs Accredited and Types of Accreditation

Accreditation	n	Percent
Is sport management programs accredited:		
Yes	30	25.6
No	87	74.4
Accrediting organization or agency		
NASSM/NASPE	11	40.7
NCATE	6	22.3
NRPA	3	11.1
NCA	3	11.1
South Central Accrediting	3	11.1
AACSB	1	3.7

Internship Requirements

Of the 79 institutions responding to this question, 68 (86.1%) reported that their undergraduates are required to complete an internship. The most frequently mentioned number of credits available for these internships was six credit hours (40). The average length of the internship at the undergraduate level was 3-4 months. Of the 64 institutions

responding to the question regarding graduate level internships, 23 (35.9%) institutions responded that they require an internship experience of their students. The most frequently mentioned number of credit hours available for graduate internships was three hours. The average length of such experiences was the same as the undergraduates at 3-4 months.

Employment

Respondents were asked to rank the top settings in which graduates were gaining employment both at the undergraduate and graduate level. Table 4 identifies in rank order the top settings in which students are finding employment. At the undergraduate level, the top settings were: professional sport franchises, school/college athletics, sport business, fitness clubs and sport marketing/merchandising. At the graduate level, the top settings were: school/college athletics, professional sport franchises, sport business, sport marketing/merchandising and facility management. Other settings common to both undergraduate and graduate employment that rounded out the top ten list were facility management, municipal parks, and recreation and sport governing bodies. Employment gaps in settings not reflected in Table 4 but were mentioned by respondents included coaching, hospital recreation, college conference headquarters, county recreation, resorts, college teaching, event management, charitable organizations, management companies, semi-professional organizations, golf courses, and athletic training.

TABLE 4
Employment Settings Identified by Respondents for Undergraduate and Graduate Students in Rank Order

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Undergraduate Students</u>	<u>Graduate Students</u>
1	Professional sport franchises	School/college athletics
2	School/college athletics	Professional sport franchises
3	Sport business	Sport business
4	Fitness clubs	Sport marketing/merchandising
5	Sport marketing/merchandising	Facility management
6	Facility management	Collegiate
7	Municipal parks and recreation	Sport governing bodies
8	Private sport clubs	Municipal parks and recreation
9	Sport governing bodies	Fitness clubs
10	YMCA/YWCA	Sport good sales
(n = 132)		

Admission Specifics

Several questions were asked regarding admission policies and practices for both undergraduate and graduate programs. For undergraduate programs in sport management, the average minimum grade point average (GPA) for admission was 2.24/4.00 while the mode was 2.0/4.0. The average number of students admitted to the sport man-

agement program per year was 33.3 students. On average, students must complete 127.6 credit hours in order to graduate.

With regard to graduate programs, the average minimum grade point average for admission was 2.83 with the mode being 3.0/4.00. The average number of graduate students admitted to the sport management program per year was 18.3 students. The average number of graduate credit hours required for graduation was 43.0 hours. Table 5 illustrates frequency responses for both undergraduate and graduate sport management programs.

TABLE 5
Admission Specifics for Sport Management Programs

Admission Information	<u>Undergraduate</u>	<u>Graduate</u>
	<u>Program</u>	<u>Program</u>
Minimum grade point average (GPA) for admission into program (n = 56/58)	2.24	2.83
Average number of students admitted per year (n = 67/60)	33.3	18.3
Maximum number of students admitted per year (n = 26/36)	40.8	23.2
Total number of credit hours required to graduate (n = 72/63)	127.6	43.0

Degree Offerings

A wide range of degree designations was indicated by respondents to the survey. At the undergraduate level, the Bachelor of Science was the most typical degree designation with a major in physical education or recreation most common. Titles of the sport specializations included: sport administration, sport management, sport fitness center management, sport studies, coaching and sport administration, sport management studies, fitness and sport management, golf management, exercise and sport science, interdisciplinary studies in sport management, management of sport industry, and others with similar titles. At the graduate level, the Master of Science was the most typical designation with the titles of the sport specializations including: sport administration, sport management, sport science, exercise and sport science, and sport, health, and leisure studies.

Sport Management Courses

The findings of the study clearly indicate that there is a diverse listing of course titles used in both undergraduate and graduate sport management curriculums. Respondents were asked to indicate from a list of 36 course titles which are required courses, elective courses or courses that simply are not offered. The course listings were divided into two groups: sport management and administration courses and business courses.

Sport Management Courses: Of the 133 institutions responding to this question, the most often cited required undergraduate sport management course titles were: Sport Law/Legal Aspects of Sport (54), Sport Administration (51), Sport Management (49),

and Athletic Administration (48). Graduate programs indicated: Research Methods (58), Sport Law and Legal Aspects of Sport (48) followed by Sport Administration (38), Statistics (38), and Sport Management (37).

The most often cited course titles offered as elective courses were: Coaching of Sports (34) and Officiating (30) for undergraduate programs and Sport Psychology (36) and Facility Management (28) for graduate programs. The courses offered the least were: Club Sport Operations, Program Development, and Sport Communication for undergraduate programs and Officiating, Club Sport Operation, and Safety in graduate programs. Table 6 provides a listing of the most popular sport management course titles.

TABLE 6
Sport Management Courses

UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM	GRADUATE PROGRAM
<u>Required Sport Management Courses:</u>	
Sport Law/Legal Aspects of Sport (54)	Research Methods (58)
Sport Administration (51)	Sport Law/Legal Aspects of Sport (48)
Sport Management (49)	Sport Administration (38)
Athletic Administration (48)	Statistics (38)
	Sport Management (37)
<u>Elective Sport Management Courses:</u>	
Coaching of Sports (34)	Sport Psychology (36)
Officiating (30)	Facility Management (28)
<u>Required Business Courses:</u>	
Budgeting (59)	Marketing (18)
Marketing (55)	Budgeting (13)
Economics (54)	
<u>Elective Business Courses:</u>	
Organizational Behavior (31)	Organizational Behavior (32)
Business Communications (27)	Business Communications (30)
(n = 133)	

Note. The numbers in parentheses represent the actual number of institutions who indicated these courses.

Business Courses: With regards to business course titles, Budgeting (59), Marketing (55) and Economics (54) were the most often cited course titles in undergraduate programs. For graduate programs, Marketing (18) and Budgeting (13) were cited most often. Undergraduate programs listed elective course titles of Organizational Behavior (31) and Business Communications (27) as most often while Organizational Behavior (32) and Business Communication (30) were cited for graduate programs.

Resources

Institutions were asked to indicate the organization(s) or association(s) consulted in planning, organizing, and conducting their sport management programs. Of the 115

institutions responding, 47 (40.9%) indicated that AAHPERD headquarters was their primary source of curriculum information while 42 (36.5%) indicated that NASSM was their primary source. Other organizations or associations mentioned were NRPA (4) and the National Intramural-Recreational Sports Association (3). Sixteen respondents indicated that no organization was consulted in the development of sport management courses.

Discussion

While the results of this study show that many institutions provide both an undergraduate and graduate curriculum and corresponding degrees, there was no indication that the two curricula are distinguished in terms of content. This has been a concern of recognized sport management scholars (Brassie, 1989; DeSensi, et al., 1990; Hardy, 1987; Parkhouse, 1987) since the inception of undergraduate curricula in sport management. Brassie (1989) echoes this concern by stating "a student may enter a sport management program either as an undergraduate or graduate, complete the prescribed curriculum, and graduate with basically the same knowledge and application experiences at either degree level" (p. 159). Hardy (1987) implies that undergraduate curricula should provide the technical competencies needed by sport managers while graduate study should be a specialization and one that "orient graduates to using competencies in the fulfillment of management tasks" (p. 208). Kelley, Beitel, DeSensi and Blanton (1994) support this channel of thought through their proposal that persons with graduate degrees in sport management "would be prepared to accept positions at the administrative policy development level" (p. 98). Furthermore, the NASPE-NASSM Joint Task Force (1993), in their development of standards for sport management curricula, recommend that the graduate-level programs "build upon the core content" (p. 165) presented in their undergraduate standards. The need for this distinction is recognized and steps have been taken to fulfill that need, yet it is the responsibility of individual institutions to implement changes, both in terms of faculty and course-content, in order to accomplish the goal of two distinct levels of sport management curriculum. The findings in this research indicate further study is needed to review the depth and breadth of course offerings in undergraduate and graduate sport management curricula.

The majority of sport management programs are found in physical education/kinesiology departments on campus. This location of sport management curriculums indicates for many institutions sport management has its roots in physical education. The philosophical legacy of physical education is based in the study of human movement (Sheffield & Davis, 1986) and the development of teachers and coaches for public schools (Sawyer, 1993). Competition and promotion of the most highly skilled athletes are also an integral part of the foundation of physical education. A sport management curriculum emerging from this type of background focuses upon the professional preparation of the student to manage highly competitive programs designed for the elite athlete. Administrative positions at the varsity athletic levels at both high schools and colleges, along with the professional sports level are the main foci of students studying in these sport management programs (Parks, Zanger, & Quarterman, 1998).

In comparison is the sport management curriculum emerging from recreation and leisure studies. The philosophy of this type of program is rooted in the social sciences with an emphasis upon the development of the whole individual. Sheffield and Davis (1986) suggested that recreation shares "an interest in the sports and games of humans, but expanded to include other non-movement forms of leisure and recreation" (p. 127). While competition plays a role in sport at the recreational level, cooperation along with an emphasis upon participation for all skill levels is integral to recreational sport. A sport management curriculum based upon recreation focuses upon programming and leadership of participatory sport activities. Students studying in this type of curriculum are prepared to manage sport leagues and conduct tournaments for a wide variety of skill levels at different settings where recreational sports occurs.

In this study, nine of the responding institutions administered their sport management programs are administered leisure studies/recreation departments. The small number of responses from leisure studies departments is a concern in that many leisure service agencies have extensive recreational sport offerings and the need for qualified personnel. On the other hand, this could be interpreted as evidence of a trend (while slight) for sport management curricula and courses. Sawyer (1993) supports this location for both undergraduate and graduate programs because of the many similarities between recreation and sport management as well as providing increased marketability for students.

Another interesting observation worth noting is the eight institutions reporting their programs housed under the departments of Sport Management or Sport Administration. Being administered as a "stand-alone" department could also be interpreted as a change for sport management programs. This is not necessarily a new idea, rather one that has been discussed back in the 1980s, and has simply come to fruition for some of the institutions offering sport management. In 1984, van der Smissen advocated that sport management could stand alone as a career with significant contributions from both physical education and recreation. van der Smissen further recommended that sport management could be its "own entity in terms of a core of required courses selected in accord with the competencies needed by persons going into sport management positions" (p. 11).

Based on the review of related literature and results from this study, sport management is a multi-disciplinary field of study borrowing important concepts and truths primarily from the disciplines of business, physical education, and recreation. Parkhouse (1987) acknowledged the multi-disciplinary nature of sport management in a similar survey of professional preparation programs over ten years ago. Yet, because the location of the sport management program within the university structure does invariably influence the program's orientation, the multi-disciplinary nature of this curriculum can become a difficult issue for administrators, faculty and students. The philosophy and primary emphasis of the curriculum should be a determining factor in where the program is housed. Another key factor should be career placement of graduates. For example, if graduates of the program are filling positions in municipal, military, commercial, private and non-profit settings and the philosophy of the program is divided between recreational sport programming and professional sport marketing, perhaps a recreation and

leisure studies, or a stand-alone department is a more appropriate location. The ultimate goal, of course, is whether the curriculum is providing the students with the appropriate tools, skills, and fundamental knowledge to be successful in the field, as well as opportunity for career growth and expansion.

The findings of the study noted the relatively small percentage (25.6%) of sport management programs that are accredited. This shortage of accredited programs could be a result of the fact that sport management programs are relatively new on campuses and are still developing. Another explanation could be the lack of appropriate accrediting agencies or organizations for sport management. Yet another could simply be that many programs do not have enough full-time faculty on their staffs to meet accreditation standards.

NASSM/NASPE was mentioned by one-third of those institutions indicating accredited programs as their accrediting organization. Perhaps because over one-half of the reporting institutions incorporate recreational sport programming into their curricula, the NASSM/NASPE accreditation does not fit their needs. A possible implication might be that NASSM/NASPE may need to broaden their accreditation standards to include more programs offering recreational sport programming as one of their primary emphases. Another implication of this finding might be for NRPA/AALR to develop specific accreditation standards for sport management.

While the majority of sport management programs still emanate from the traditional physical education and kinesiology curriculums, it is interesting to note that the majority of institutions (45.4%) indicated their philosophical orientation and emphasis for the curriculum was geared for both professional and recreational sports. While this may appear to some as an incongruity in traditional roles of sport and physical education, another perspective might be that sport management is broad-based enough to represent a variety of sport-related areas. Sawyer (1993) concurs with this idea by stating "sport management curriculums are flexible enough to meet the demands of student career considerations in such areas as sport leisure and recreation, sport and athletics, sporting goods industry, hostelries and travel, nonprofit agencies, and health and fitness management" (p. 4). Yet, in this study, very few institutions required or indicated that courses considered essential in recreation curriculums such as program planning and development, tournament scheduling, leadership, or personnel management, were even offered as electives. It is important to recognize that sport management is an evolving field and that changes will need to be made as we advance to meet the needs of our society. It is equally essential to recognize that sport management curricula must keep pace with these changes.

The need to keep pace with societal needs becomes more obvious when employment settings for sport management graduates are considered. Although the top three employment settings for both undergraduate and graduate levels are professional sport settings, school/college athletics, and sport business, students also find jobs in fitness clubs, municipal parks and recreation settings, private clubs and YMCA/YWCAs. In a

1988 study, DeSensi, Kelley, Beitel, and Blanton surveyed employers to rate the importance of 23 curriculum areas for potential employees. Their findings support the need for program planning, program management, leadership and personnel management to be added as a part of the core of sport management curriculums. A recent study by Toh (1997) discovered, through the use of exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, six core areas needed in sport management curriculums: governance, sport foundations, budgeting, risk management, computer skills, and communications. The identification of these six core areas makes one wonder if we truly are preparing our students to be successful in recreational sport programming as well as professional sport marketing. Because of the diversity of the career settings in sport management, it appears from the findings of this study, it is essential to review the course requirements in regards to program planning and leadership courses. Since there are entry-level jobs for students with training and background in recreational sport management in military, commercial, community, and non-profit settings, perhaps we owe our students more courses which would better prepare them for successful careers in these settings.

Lastly, the findings of this study clearly support the earlier research of Cuneen and Sidwell (1984), Ulrich and Parkhouse (1982), Parks and Quain (1986), Sutton (1989), and Bell and Countiss (1993) which emphasizes the importance of the internship experience. The internship is the foundation and vital component in the total education of the sport management student. Through the internship, a student gains important paraprofessional experience in the field prior to graduation.

Conclusions

If sport management is to gain acceptance and achieve its full potential, the quality of degree programs and courses — and graduates — must be maintained at a high level. It is essential for the sport management curricula to reflect a strong foundation in sport studies that provides depth and breadth of knowledge and understanding of the societal needs of sport, both for the recreational and elite athlete.

From the exploratory perspective of this study of sport management curricula, it appears that further research is needed to expand on the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings of the nature and role of recreational sport as a societal phenomena. Particularly, what is the role of recreational sport management's contribution not only to athletic and professional sport but to the well-being of all people? In establishing this role, curricular development can reflect an expanded focus that may allow further expansion of recreational sport curricula.

Further, the role that accreditation and attendant standards play in the development of recreational sport management needs to be further identified. Specifically, are the standards that currently exist through NRPA and NASSM guiding the development of sound curricula? Is there a need to justify inclusion of more specific recreational sport management standards in NRPA/AALR Council on Accreditation standards? The lim-

ited results in this study suggest further coordination of efforts on accreditation and other forms of standards development.

It is essential to provide follow-up research that further analyzes existing curricular offerings and identifies any curricular gaps that may exist. Continued assessment of the degree to which sport management curricula develops, reflective of sound theoretical rationale and tempered by the very real demands of a dynamic field, will provide essential additional information and analysis.

In the past we have observed some declaration of territorial rights among proponents of sport management as the result of coming from different disciplinary backgrounds. However, if our top priority is the solidification and promotion of sport management as a viable area of study, then it may be suitable to establish a broader theoretical and conceptual base for sport management. By doing this, we increase the credibility of sport management and collaborate efforts for the promotion of the full spectrum of sport management. In the long run, the student choosing this field as a career path is the real winner.

References

- Bell, J. A., & Countiss, J. R. (1993). Professional service through sport management internships. Journal of Health, Physical Education and Recreation, 64(7), 45-52.
- Brassie, P. S. (1989). Guidelines for programs preparing undergraduate and graduate students for careers in sport management. Journal of Sport Management, 3, 158-164.
- Chelladurai, P. (1992). Sport management: Opportunities and obstacles. Journal of Sport Management, 6, 215-219.
- Cuneen, J. ,& Sidwell, M. J. (1994). Sport management field experiences. Morgantown, WV: Fitness Information Technology, Inc.
- DeSensi, J. T., Kelley, D. R., Beitel, P. A., & Blanton, M. D. (1990). Sport management curricular evaluation and needs assessment: A multifaceted approach. Journal of Sport Management, 4, 31-58.
- DeSensi, J. T., Kelley, D. R., Beitel, P. A., & Blanton, M. D. (1988). Employer expectations of sport managers and evaluation of sport management programs in the United States. Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the North American Society of Sport Management, Urbana, IL.
- Edginton, C. R., Jordan, D. J., DeGraaf, D. G., & Edginton, S. R. (1998). Leisure and life satisfaction: Foundational perspectives (2nd ed.). Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill.
- Hardy, S. (1987). Graduate curriculums in sport management: The need for a business orientation. Quest, 39, 207-216.

Kelly, J. R. (1996). Leisure (3rd ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Kelley, D. R., Beitel, P. A., DeSensi, J. T., & Blanton, M. D. (1994). Undergraduate and graduate sport management curricular models: A perspective. Journal of Sport Management, 8, 93-101.

Mull, R. F., Bayless, K. G., Ross, C. M., & Jamieson, L. M. (1997). Recreational sport management (3rd ed.). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics Publishing.

NASPE-NASSM (1993). Sport management program standards and review protocol. Reston, VA: AAHPERD.

NASPE-NASSM Joint task Force on Sport Management Curriculum and Accreditation. (1993). Standards for curriculum and voluntary accreditation of sport management education programs. Journal of Sport Management, 7, 159-170.

Parkhouse, B. L. (1987). Sport management curricula: Current status and design implication for future development. Journal of Sport Management, 1, 93-115.

Parkhouse, B. L. (1996). The management of sport: Its foundation and application (2nd ed.). St. Louis: Mosby.

Parks, J. B., Zanger, B. R. K., & Quarterman, J. (1998). Introduction to sport management. In J. B. Parks, B. R. K. Zanger, & J. Quarterman (Eds.), Contemporary Sport Management (pp. 1-13). Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics.

Parks, J. B., & Quain, R. J. (1986). Sport management survey: Curriculum perspectives. Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 57, 22-26.

Robinson, J. P., & Godbey, G. (1997). Time for life: The surprising ways americans use their time. University Park, PA: The Pennsylvania State University.

Salant, P., & Dillman, D. A. (1994). How to conduct your own survey. New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Sawyer, T. H. (1993). Sport management: Where should it be housed? Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 64(9), 4-5.

Sheffield, E. A., & Davis, K. A. (1986). The scientific status of sport management: An evolving disciplinary branch of study. Quest, 38(2), 125-134.

Shivers, J. S., & de Lisle, L. J. (1997). The story of leisure: Context, concepts, and current controversy. Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics Publishing.

Skipper, W. T. (1990). Competencies for collegiate sports facility managers: Implications for a facility management curricular model. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Arkansas, Fayetteville.

Sutton, W. A. (1989). The role of internships in sport management curricula: A model for development. Journal of Physical Education, Recreation and Dance, 60(7), 20-24.

Toh, K. L. (1997). Constructing and validating competencies of sport managers (COSM) instrument: A model development. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Indiana University, Bloomington.

van der Smissen, B. (1984). Sport management curricula: An idea whose time has come! In Zanger, B. K., & Parks, J. B. (Eds.), Sport management curricula: The business and education nexus (pp. 5-18). Bowling Green, OH: Bowling Green State University.